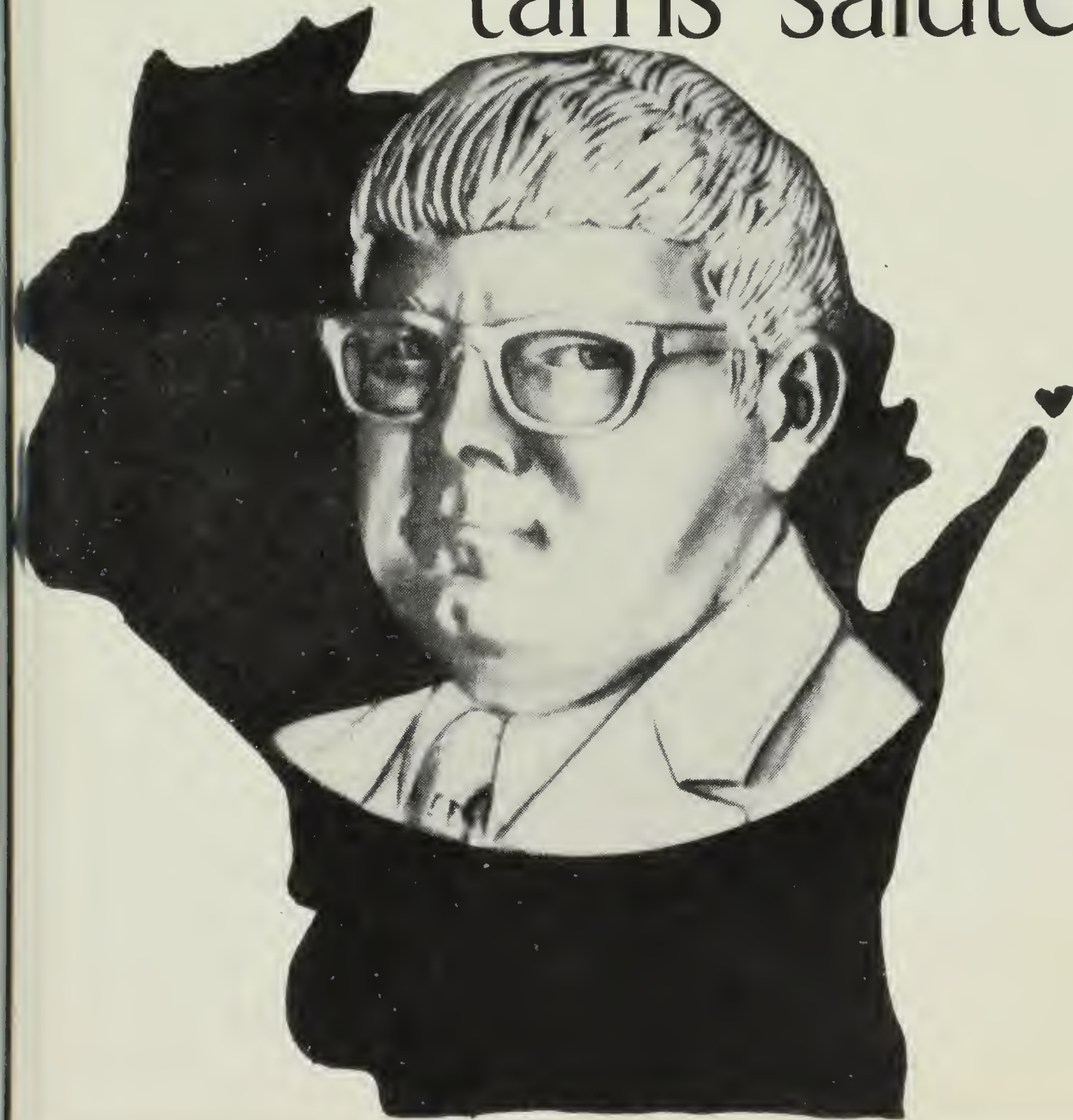


now—news

mishler gets tams salute



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The objective of Numismatists of Wisconsin shall be to encourage and promote interest in numismatics; to cultivate friendly relations between Wisconsin coin collectors and the state's coin clubs, as well as collectors of other states; and, to encourage and assist new collectors and coin clubs. All resources of the organization shall be used to further the above objectives.

History of the Madison Coin Club

**related by
Gordon
Gill**



(Editor's Note:
This is the
second part of a
two-part series
concerning the
Madison Coin Club
and the early
collecting days
of Gordon Gill.
The early history
of the Madison
club is deeply
rooted in the
personal collect-
ing experiences
of A.G. (Gordon)
Gill, one of the
club's founding
members. Gill is
still extremely
active in the
hobby and holds
various local,
state and nation-
al appointments
within the field.
He pursue the
hobby of kings
with great zeal.)

The bank win-
dows were flat
back then, like
store windows.
Copper and silver
(no gold) coins
were quite often
seen on display
in them. Invari-
ably, the owners
wanted to sell
the coins.

I recall one
display of old
coins just heap-
ed in a window:
Nickels, dimes,
Indian cents,
just everything
--even Civil War
tokens. The view-
er could look in
the window and
maybe see a nice
three-cent piece
or, from a dif-
ferent angle,
something else.

Another dis-
play I especial-
ly remember was
Mendelson's big
collection ex-
hibited in a
bank's window. I

went out to Sher-
man Ave. to ask
the owner about
the coins.

Mrs. Mendel-
son, whose hus-
band had died a-
bout two years
prior to this
visit of mine, ex-
plained that her
husband had been
the collector. I
asked her if she
was interested in
selling the coins.

“Certainly,”
she responded while
indicating that she
wanted to retain a
few pieces for her
grandchildren.

I came out a
week later, after
she gathered the
hoard up from the
bank window and
brought it to her
home.

I bought the
bulk of the col-
lection. There
were a number of
three-cent pieces
(continued)

two-cent pieces, many Large cents and everything was in pretty good condition. I bought them quite reasonably--the Large cents at about 25¢ to 35¢ each. That's about what they were bringing in the Mehl catalog.

When I had picked out what I wanted, there was quite a bit left.

//What are you going to do with what's left?// I asked.

She said she'd give some to her grandchildren and deposit the rest at face value in the bank.

//I'll pay you double face value for the remainder and use the coins for trading material,// I offered.

So, she picked

out the coins for her grandchildren and I purchased what was left.

Another time, Mr. Menges, the owner of the pharmacy where I first worked, had quite a large group of old coins in his safe. I happened to find this fact out from his bookkeeper. When the opportunity arrived, I asked Menges about them.

There really weren't that many pieces. What Menges did have were in nice condition so I bought all of them--Two-cent and three-cent pieces, half dimes and Large cents not to mention Civil War tokens.

In those days proof coins sold

for less than uncirculated ones for the simple reason that nobody wanted them. I collected for 10 years and was just as ignorant as other collectors about proof coins.

We didn't know what a proof coin was. We just passed them by.

Trial pieces and patterns were placed in a box with the unknown coins.

We didn't collect proof coins of 1936 at the time because we didn't know about them. It was the first year for proofs in 20 years and the whole thing was down-peddled; no fanfare about it at all.

In 1937, many
(continued)

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N.O.W.
L-24



LM #1809

Madison club members, including myself, started to order the proof coins. This was when I discontinued collecting the sets.

Back in the early days, we use to write in an order for uncirculated coins from the Mint. Not only the sets but individual coins, ususally five nickels, five dimes, and so forth.

I always sent in orders this way. You could order as many coins as you wanted, subject to what was held over from the previous year. Morgan 1921 silver dollars were in surplus for years.

The single coins were sent out wrapped in

tissue paper and were very nice. I think the Mint was kind of hand picking them, but I'm not sure.

They charged no premium on the coins, but you had to pay first class postage and registration.

Proof coins could also be ordered as singles up to 1942. Every year I ordered five proof cents because they were cheap. They made superior proof coins back then in comparison to those made today. They seemed a little more careful then.

In 1937, the proof cents were sold for 16¢, the nickels and dimes at 20¢. the quarters at 50¢, and the half dollar at 75¢. This included face. The

loose proof coins were also wrapped in tissue paper when mailed from the Mint.

In those days, the Mint did not maintain a mailing list. You wrote in and they would send you a list of what Unc. coins they had on hand. Sometimes these issues went back 10, 12, up to 15 years. A real nice service!

This backlog of 15 years existed only during the early '20s. My records show that by 1943, the only old mintage coin then available was the 1921 Morgan silver dollar. The 1942 dime, the '43 half quarter, dime, nickel of Philadelphia and the '42 San Francisco half, quarter, dime and nickel could be
(continued)

ordered.

These coins could be ordered from the U.S. Treasurer with a limit of two each per order. Remittance was face value plus first class postage and the purpose for acquiring the coins had to be stated.

We had no checklists or anything similar back then. Max Mehl was, of course, in business at the time --he was the only man at the national level we ever heard of. There were many advanced numismatists at the time, but we never knew them. We were lucky to get a copy of the Mehl catalog and we only had a few of them.

There was no

such thing as mail order as we know it today. You ordered from the Mehl catalog or not at all. He was buying more than selling in those days. Coins in the catalog were listed in a very vague way, i.e., Flying Eagle, nickel cent: good \$3, proof \$5. By today's standards, that left a lot of conditions between the two to wonder about.

When you looked through Mehl's catalog, you'd see all the coins listed by date. That was our guide. When we came to 1815 or some date like that, we didn't know if the coin had been made or not.

The very first coin I col-

lected was an 1857 Large cent my dad had possessed for years. He didn't carry it around with him, so it was in nice condition. I was so intrigued with that 1857, it seemed it reached way back into colonial times to me--probably because I was about 12 or 13 years of age at the time.

When I first started working in the pharmacy, which I previously mentioned in brief, a fellow came in with a handful of about 20 coins. In the bunch were a couple of silver dollars that he seemed to think were worth a lot of money.

So, I looked them over and found that the

(continued)

silver dollars weren't worth much, about \$1.50 each. However, in the batch was a nice 1804 Large cent.

"I'll give you \$10 for that 1804 cent," I said.

"Ten dollars!" he gasped as he grabbed the coin and ran out the door to show his wife. He sure was excited about the cent being worth \$10. He sold me the coin and I have it yet.

After that, I acquired the 1799 cent, but I'm still proud of the 1804 because of the sentiment involved.

I can't recall how many silver dollars the man had; I was so happy about the 1804 cent.

Even back in those days, Max Mehl's catalog cautioned you about the counterfeit 1804s. I checked to see that the "10" of the date was exactly opposite the "10" in "10F" and it looked okay. The 1804 cent is worth about \$450 now.

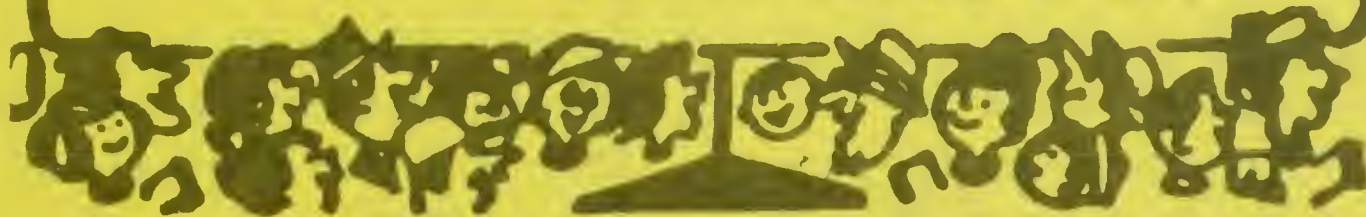
I'm proud of my 1799 Large cent in a way too. A man named Mertz use to stop on his way through to Chicago from his home in Minnesota. He'd stop at all the banks on the way looking for coins. He was a dealer, in fact, I purchased a partial set of small cents from him. Later, I built that partial set

into my personal set.

On one of his trips through, he appraised and offered to buy some coins from some people in Maple Bluff. The lady who had the coins didn't want to sell them to Mertz. About two or three weeks later, I found out about them. I went over there and saw the 1799 Large cent in the lot. I finally bought the accumulation.

Collectors are fortunate today to have the numerous collector aides and authoritative references available to them. The greatest advantage today in collecting is that more collectors specialize.

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N.O.W. LM #30



editorial

There has been much said for and against the idea of a NOW hosted Central States Numismatic Society convention in Milwaukee in 1984.

A faction of the NOW organization based in Milwaukee identifies any coin convention or show held in that area--that is, not sponsored by an organization of the area--as an intrusion onto their soil. And fertile soil it is.

For instance, the Milwaukee Numismatic Society makes well over \$1,000 per show they host at the Red Carpet Inn. The last CSNS convention held there netted that group over \$10,000. And this group alone, or in conjunction with other Milwaukee-based clubs, could stand to make (or lose) many more thousands of dollars on a CSNS show.

Another faction within the NOW organization wishes to see the statewide group host the show. Focus here, again, is on the loot to be made. The NOW board approved the concept of a NOW hosted CSNS convention by an almost 3-to-1 vote.

The problem here is what each faction intends to do with the gross (no pun intended) returns from a CSNS convention.

On the one hand, the MNS has a bulging bankroll in the thousands of dollars and cannot boast of even one scholarship program. On the other hand, NOW has never been financially secure because it underwrites numerous numismatic programs and projects.

If such funds were to come to Wisconsin, where would they be better spent: Underwriting programs and projects for the state's hobbyists or sitting in the confines of some dingy dark bank vault? The answer is apparent.--T.F.

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NONFEDERAL MILITARY

By Fred Borgmann, NEWS

Presented in this article is a brief survey of the service medals issued by or within the State of Wisconsin.

This survey cannot be considered a complete listing; rather, it is a tantalizing taste of what has become challenging in a specialized collecting field.

Sources of information on the medals covered within this survey are very limited. One of the sources is my personal collection. Other sources include

various dealers and fellow military medal collectors.

Any additional information concerning medals of Wisconsin or from any other continental 48 states, please contact me at P.O. Box 135, Iola, Wis. 54945.

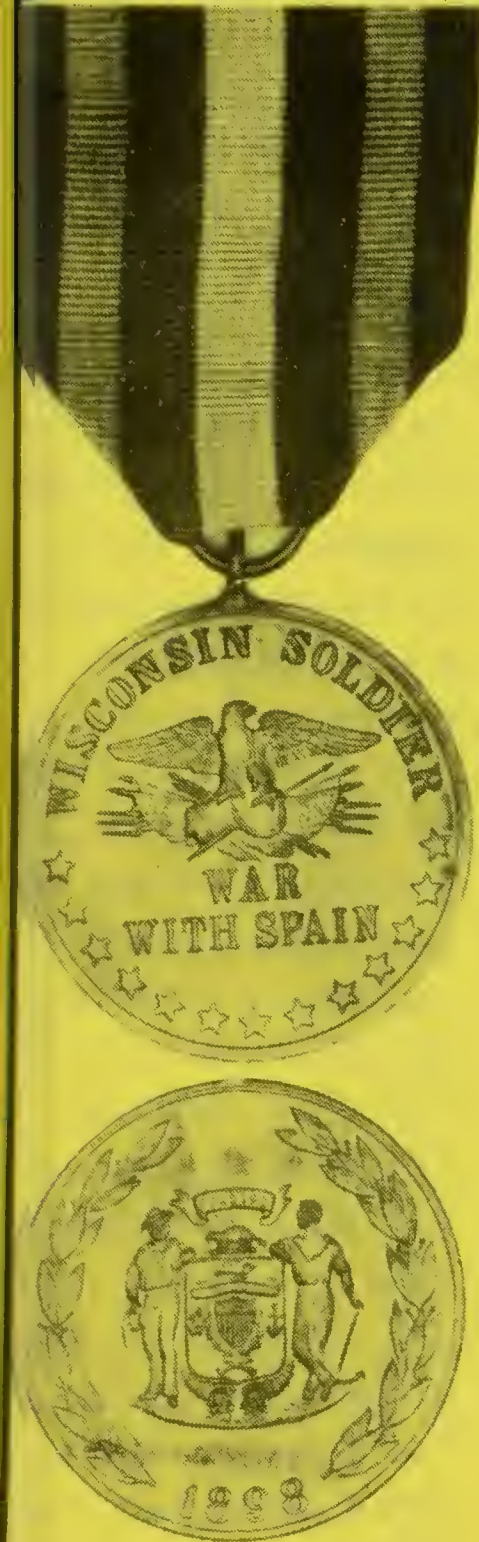
NONFEDERAL MILITARY SERVICE MEDALS

Nonfederal military service medals first appeared in the United States during the Civil War era. These medals seem
(continued)



3rd Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers.

SERVICE MEDALS



Remember the
Maine! and war
with Spain.

to have been inspired by two basic factors: First, the lack of federal awards and, secondly, the widespread recognition received by the artistically beautiful series of British military campaign medals.

This project was expensive. Only the larger northern states seem to have awarded Civil War medals.

As of the moment, I have never heard of a Wisconsin state or city Civil War medal issue. Many units, however,

did have special commemorative medals struck for themselves to help them remember their days in arms.

One such unit was the 3rd Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers. This unit's mascot was the famous 'Olde Abe,' an American eagle.

The medal is a table medal not intended to be worn. It is gold colored white metal, 40mm in diameter. Obverse depicts the Wisconsin coat of arms. Reverse carries a six-line legend within a
(continued)

laurel wreath:
//3d. REGt. WIS-
CONSIN VOLs. COL.
THOs. H. RUGER
COM.//

Remember the
Maine? This bat-
tleship was sunk
by a Spanish tor-
pedo in Havana
Harbor in 1898.
In reality, the
ship was sunk due
to an internal
explosion--a fact
which has remain-
ed a state secret
for 75 years.

//Remember the
Maine// was the
battle cry which
pressured a re-
luctant President
McKinley to issue
the first call
for 125,000 vol-
unteers on April
25, 1898. The
next day, Spain
declared war and
a whole new
series of state
issued medals was
in the offing.

Wisconsin re-



Mexican Border
Service Medal is-
sued 1916-1917.

sponded to the
call and, event-
ually in 1916 or
1917, issued a
service medal for
the Wisconsin
Spanish-American
War veterans.

The medal is
bronze, 33mm in
diameter, and sus-
pended from a red,
white and blue
ribbon. Superim-
posed are the
Spanish tri-colors
of red, yellow and
red.

Obverse of the
medal depicts an
eagle perched on
war trophies. The
legend //WISCONSIN
SOLDIER WAR WITH
SPAIN// appears
and 13 stars round
off the bottom of
the design.

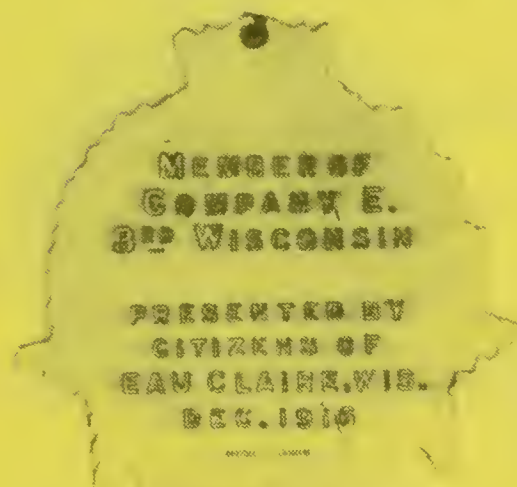
Reverse of the
medal portrays the
Wisconsin coat of
arms between two
sprigs of laurel
and above is the
(continued)

ate of 1898.

The medal was issued in an envelope with the logo of Louis Esser Co., a Milwaukee jewelry firm still in business. This firm is either unwilling or unable to say if they manufactured the medals or simply distributed them.

In 1916, there was a nation-wide call up of National Guard units to active duty along the Mexican border. This was in the aftermath of Pancho Villa's raids into the United States. Villa had turned from a bandit into a revolutionary and made a couple of killing prees into the U.S. across the Mexican border.

The State of



Eau Claire presented their boys with this Mexican Border incident medal.

Wisconsin plus several other cities within the state issued Mexican border duty medals.

The Wisconsin state medal is brass, 34mm in diameter, and comes suspended from at least two different colored ribbons. One ribbon is red, white and light green. The second ribbon is red, dark green and yellow. Difference in ribbons usually indicates differences in the types of units to which they are awarded. These units include: Infantry, artillery or cavalry. These medals were also issued in Louis Esser envelopes.

Reverse of the Wisconsin Mexican Border Duty Medal bears a large star (continued)

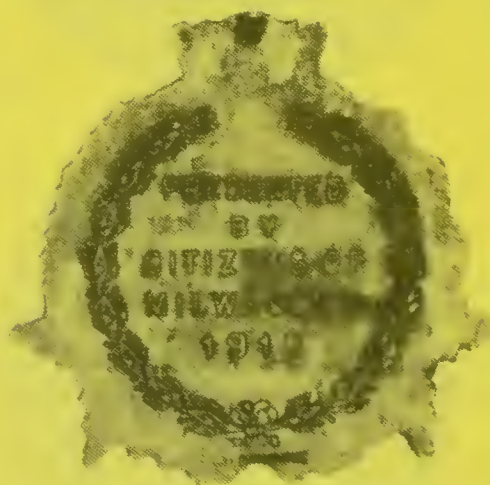
between two
sprigs of laurel;
below are the
dates 1916-1917.

Obverse of the
medal depicts
three palm trees
in a desert land-
scape. The legend
reads: //WISCON-
SIN NATIONAL
GUARD MEXICAN
BORDER SERVICE.//

Mexican border
duty medals is-
sued by Wisconsin
cities include an
Eau Claire issue.

This silver-
bronze medals
measures about
5mm in diameter
at its widest
points and is
suspended from a
red, white and
blue silk ribbon
with a plain sus-
pension broach.

Obverse of the
medal pictures an
American eagle
perched on a rib-
bon, which is a-
bove the Wiscon-
sin coat of arms.



Milwaukee gave
its boys this
medal for duty
on the Mexican
border.

The legend reads:
//MEXICAN BORDER
DUTY U.S. NATION-
AL GUARD.//

Reverse bears
the seven-line
legend: //MEMBER
OF COMPANY E. 3RD
WISCONSIN PRESENT-
ED BY CITIZENS OF
EAU CLAIRE. WIS.
DEC. 1916.//

Manufacturer
of the Eau Claire
medal was the
Schwabb Company
of Milwaukee.

Milwaukee al-
so issued a Mexi-
can border duty
medal for its boys
who served during
the period. This
silver-bronze is-
sue is about 51mm
in diameter at
the widest point
and is suspended
from a dark blue
ribbon and plain
broach.

Obverse of the
Milwaukee medal
depicts an Amer-
ican eagle perch-
(continued)



Kurt R. Krueger

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Kurt R. Krueger

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ed atop a ribbon under which is the City of Milwaukee seal.

Reverse bears the five-line legend within a laurel wreath:
//PRESENTED BY
CITIZENS OF MIL-
WAUKEE 1916.//

Ripon also issued a medal for the Mexican border incident. It is a silver-bronze 51mm medal which is suspended from a red, white and blue silk ribbon. The broach is inscribed: //D. 2nd WIS.//

Obverse of the medal bears the same design as the Eau Claire piece.

Reverse has



the legend: //PRE-
SENTED BY THE CITY
OF RIPON TO MEM-
BERS OF COMPANY D.
2nd WIS. INF. MARCH 16, 1917.//
It was also manu-
factured by Sch-
wabb Company of
Milwaukee.

A second part
of this two part
series will appear
in a 1979 issue
of NOW News.

Ripon paid re-
spect to its
fighting men with
this medal.

mishler medal now available

NOW past prez, Clifford Mishler, has been saluted in an official token and medal society (TAMS) Past Presidents medal. Mishler's term of office expired this past August.

Like earlier issues of the medal series, this 10th addition to the TAMS series is a two-inch diameter piece, which is offered to collectors in both mahogany finish bronze and antique finish silver. Only 25 examples have been struck in silver.

In addition to the bronze and



Clifford Mishler is honored by TAMS. Medals are available by writing directly to TAMS, P.O. Box 316, Iola, Wis. 54945.

silver editions, a single gold-filled specimen was struck and included in a set of medals presented to the retiring Mishler.

Bronze specimens are priced at \$10 each, the silver versions at \$47 each. A set of the two medals is priced at \$55.

Medals honoring previous TAMS presidents are still available on a limited basis in bronze. A few examples of the Curto, Mitchell, Johnson and Dow silver medals are available at \$35 each until supply is exhausted.

n.o.w. news release

Location for the 1979 Numismatists of Wisconsin convention was approved by the board of governors at their Sept. 16 meeting.

The Milwaukee Numismatic Society will host the 1979 convention, May 5-6, at the Red Carpet Inn, just opposite Billy Mitchell Field. In 1980, the convention will be held in Waukesha and in 1981 in Neenah.

Nominations for officers to be elected at the May convention are now being taken. Interest-

individuals must submit their choices to Monte Sherwin as early as possible.

A club presidents' breakfast will be held in conjunction with the May convention. All presidents of Wisconsin-based coin clubs are invited to attend. The breakfast will be held at 9 .m. on May 6. Chairing the brief meeting after the breakfast will be Monte Sherwin.

In other action at the board meeting, the organization voted to extend an invitation to the Central States

Numismatic Society to hold its 1984 convention as a joint show with the annual NOW convention, and that it be held in Milwaukee at MECCA. The CSNA board is reported to have taken this invitation into consideration at their Nov. 4-5 interim meeting in Omaha, Nebr.

At the Nov. 12 board meeting, letters were read opposing the CSNS convention coming to Milwaukee in 1984 hosted by NOW. These letters were submitted by Lee Hartz of the (continued)

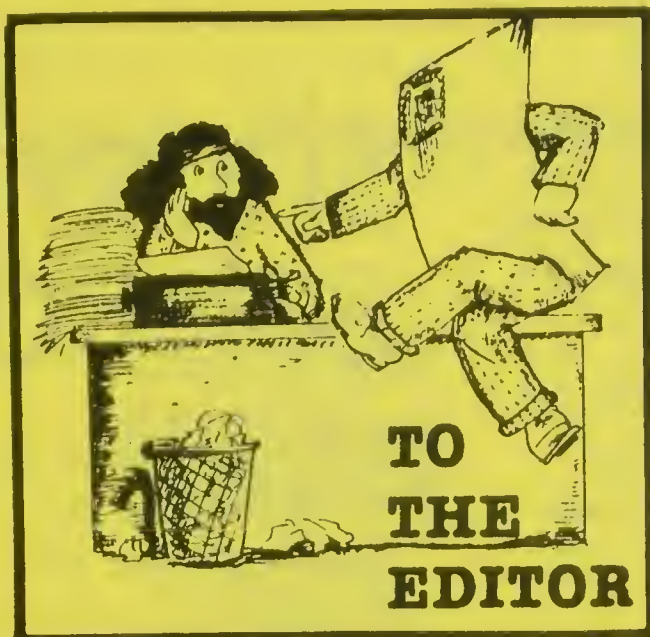
Waukees Numis-
tic Society
and John Wilson
of the South
more Coin Club.

The following
persons have been
appointed to a
convention site
selection commit-
tee: Kurt Krueg-
er, Bob Lemke and
Monte Sherwin.
Harold Helm was
appointed to the
NOW Scholarship
committee.

The treasurer-
secretary's re-
port notes that
there is a bal-
ance on hand of
\$1,542.44.

Total expenses
from July 30 to
Nov. 21 of this
year amounted to
\$1,157.50.

These figures
were supplied by
Grome Tillung.



I read in one of the last issues
of The Numismatist about two Wis-
consin collectors who won scholar-
ships to the American Numismatic
Association's Summer Seminar.

I would like to take the ANA's
counterfeit detection seminar, but
it will be several years before I
can save enough money to make it.
How can I apply for one of these
scholarships?

G.D.

Green Bay

Well G.D., the collectors of
Wisconsin are extremely fortunate
in that two of the state's numis-
matic organizations offer annual
scholarships to the ANA Summer Sem-
inar: NOW and WYN.

The announcement of each year's
scholarship competition is carried
in this publication.

show schedule

GREEN BAY.....
Jan. 20, Nicolet
Coin Club Annual
Winter Show,
Downtowner Hotel.
Mike Segersin,
1159 Day, Green
Bay.

BROOKFIELD.....
Jan. 26-28, Numis-
mafest, Brookfield
Shopping Center.
Adm. free. Bill
Mann, Brookfield
Square Shopping
Center, 95 N.
Moorland, Brook-
field 53005.

GREEN BAY.....
March 17, Nicolet
Coin Club Annual
Spring Show, Mid-
way Motor Lodge.
Mike Segersin,
1159 Day, Green
Bay.

EAU CLAIRE.....
April 29, Chippewa
Valley Coin Club
Show, Holiday Inn.
Jerome Tillung,

Clubs are urged to mail in-
formation on their shows to the
editor at the earliest possible
date and patterned after those
appearing in this schedule.

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Dr., Eau Claire
54701.

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January 21
Downtowner Hotel
Green Bay

Annual Spring Coin Show
March 18
Midway Motor Lodge
Green Bay

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